

Peking Duck

1 x 2 kg/4 lb oven-ready duck
4 tablespoons soft brown sugar
2 tablespoons soy sauce
2 tablespoons clear honey

PANCAKES:

125 g/4 oz plain flour
about 125 ml/4 fl oz boiling water
rapeseed oil, for frying

TO SERVE:

plum or hoisin sauce

½ cucumber, cut into very thin
matchstick strips

6 spring onions, cut into 5 cm/2 inch
lengths and shredded finely

1 Remove fat inside the duck. Rinse duck inside and out under cold running water. Pat thoroughly dry, inside and out, with paper towels.

2 Tie string around the neck flap of the duck. Lower the bird into a large saucepan of boiling water for about 1 minute or until the skin is taut.

3 Remove from the water, then hang up by the string over a dish. Leave to dry in a cool airy place for 2 hours.

4 Roast, breast-side up, on a rack in a roasting tin at 190°C (375°F), Gas Mark 5 for 30 minutes.

5 For the pancakes, sift the flour into a bowl, add the boiling water a little at a time, and beat vigorously with a wooden spoon after each addition until a stiff dough is formed. Cover with a cloth and leave to stand for at least 20 minutes.

6 Combine the sugar, soy sauce and honey and brush all over the duck.



Continue roasting 1½ hours or until the skin is crisp, dry and golden.

7 When cooked, transfer duck to a board and let stand for 15 minutes.

8 Make the pancakes: break the dough into 8 pieces with floured hands and roll each into a ball. On a lightly floured surface, roll each ball out to a 15 cm/6 inch round.

9 Heat a little oil in a small frying pan. Add a pancake and fry for 1-2 minutes on each side until puffed up and lightly coloured. Slide on to a warm plate and cover with a damp cloth. Repeat with the remaining pancakes, brushing the pan with more oil between each and stacking them on top of each other under the damp cloth.

10 Remove the string from the duck, slice off the crisp skin and cut it into thin strips. Slice the meat into thin strips. Arrange skin and meat together on a warmed serving plate.

11 Serve the duck with pancakes, plum or hoisin sauce, cucumber and spring onions on separate plates. Put a little sauce on a pancake, add crispy skin, meat, cucumber and spring onions. Roll up and eat with fingers or chopsticks.

Serves 3-4

Preparation time: 45 minutes, plus air-drying

Cooking time: 2 hours

Oven temperature: 190°C (375°F),
Gas Mark 5